



Empowering Communities for Sustainable Energy and Conservation in Tanzania

TaTEDO-SESO advancing inclusive natural resource governance under WWF's Leading the Change Programme

Across Tanzania's southern landscapes, a quiet transformation is taking place. Communities, schools, civil society organizations, and local authorities are working together to address environmental degradation, promote sustainable energy access, and ensure meaningful participation in natural resource governance.

At the center of this transformation is **TaTEI (TaTEDO-SESO)**, a long-standing Tanzania-based organization promoting sustainable energy access and environmental conservation. Through **the Change Phase II (LtC2) Programme**, supported by Sida, TaTEDO-SESO has planned to participate actively in conservation while reducing pressure on forests and ecosystems.

The LtC2 programme (2023–2028) aims to empower communities to advocate for inclusive natural resource protection, ensuring that people can exercise their rights and responsibilities.



Strengthening Civil Society for Inclusive Conservation

One of TaTEDO-SESO's major contributions to the programme has been strengthening the capacity of civil society and community institutions to engage in environmental governance and policy processes.

Through policy dialogues, regional forums, and multi-stakeholder platforms, TaTEDO-SESO has facilitated meaningful engagement between civil society, government institutions, and private sector actors on clean energy and natural resource management. These platforms have helped raise awareness about national frameworks such as the **National Clean Cooking Strategy (2024–2034)** and the **National Charcoal Strategy**, which are critical for reducing environmental degradation caused by unsustainable biomass use.

Two national policy dialogues organized in collaboration with the **Clean Cooking Alliance of Tanzania (CCAT)** and the **Sustainable Energy Forum (SEF)** brought together policymakers, civil society actors, and development partners to discuss practical solutions for accelerating clean cooking adoption and strengthening environmental governance. These dialogues helped stakeholders develop a shared understanding of the importance of

affordable clean cooking technologies and the need for coordinated policy implementation across sectors.

Empowering Communities and Local Governance Structures

At the community level, TaTEDO-SESO has worked closely with **District Energy Teams (DiSEDCs)** and community groups across Rufiji, Kilwa, Mtama, and Masasi districts to strengthen participatory governance in natural resource management.

Through targeted training and awareness campaigns, community members—including women, youth, and local leaders—have gained knowledge on sustainable energy solutions, governance principles, and environmental conservation practices. In total, **over 694 people increased their understanding of sustainable energy technologies and governance frameworks**, strengthening their ability to influence local development decisions and environmental management processes.



Community groups established through the programme are now actively engaged in promoting sustainable energy technologies such as improved cookstoves and solar dryers while strengthening transparency and participatory decision-making in their organizations.

In Nyamwage village, for example, a community network known as **MJANEUMANYA** was formed to coordinate sustainable energy and environmental conservation initiatives. Through this network, community members are organizing awareness campaigns, sharing best practices, and advocating for sustainable natural resource management in their communities.

Transforming Schools into Environmental Champions

Young people are playing a critical role in advancing environmental awareness and sustainable practices in the project areas. Through school-based environmental and energy clubs, students are learning about clean energy technologies, climate change, and forest conservation.



More than **541 students** have been trained on sustainable energy and environmental conservation, helping them become ambassadors for environmental stewardship within their schools and communities.

Schools participating in the programme have also established tree nurseries, producing **over 20,000 tree seedlings**, with more than **3,000 seedlings planted around school environments**, contributing to ecosystem restoration and biodiversity conservation efforts.

These initiatives demonstrate how empowering youth can create long-term environmental awareness and community engagement.

Promoting Clean Cooking Energy for Environmental Protection

Traditional cooking practices relying on firewood and charcoal remain one of the leading drivers of deforestation and environmental degradation in Tanzania. Recognizing this challenge, TaTEDO-SESO has integrated clean cooking promotion into its conservation work under the LtC2 programme.

Community groups, schools, and local leaders have been introduced to improved cookstoves and other clean cooking technologies that reduce fuel consumption, indoor air pollution, and pressure on forests.

Many households report tangible benefits after adopting improved cookstoves. Community members have observed reduced smoke exposure, lower cooking costs, and reduced firewood consumption—improving both environmental sustainability and household well-being.



Media outreach campaigns further amplified these efforts, reaching **over 7,000 people through television, radio, and digital platforms** with messages promoting sustainable energy technologies and the National Clean Cooking Strategy.

Building Partnerships for Sustainable Impact

The success of TaTEDO-SESO's work under the LtC2 programme has been driven by strong partnerships with government institutions, civil society organizations, community groups, and international partners.

Participation in regional platforms such as the **Africa Energy Marketplace** and the **Eastern Africa Clean Cooking Energy Symposium** has allowed TaTEDO-SESO to share Tanzania's experiences and strengthen collaboration with regional stakeholders working on energy access and environmental sustainability.

These partnerships are helping to build momentum toward a cleaner and more sustainable energy future across Tanzania and the wider East African region.

A Path Toward a Sustainable Future

The work of TaTEDO-SESO under WWF's Leading the Change programme demonstrates the powerful role that civil society organizations can play in linking environmental conservation, sustainable energy access, and community empowerment.

By strengthening governance systems, empowering communities, and promoting clean energy solutions, the programme is helping to reduce environmental pressures while improving livelihoods and resilience in vulnerable communities.

TaTEDO-SESO remains committed to expanding its efforts, ensuring that communities across Tanzania have the knowledge, tools, and voice needed to protect their natural resources and build a sustainable future.